

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1924

To provide for the establishment of a commission to review and make recommendations to the Congress and the States on alternative and non-traditional routes to teacher certification.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 21, 2001

Mr. DUNCAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To provide for the establishment of a commission to review and make recommendations to the Congress and the States on alternative and nontraditional routes to teacher certification.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Advisory
5 Commission on Alternative Routes to Teacher Certifi-
6 cation Act of 2001”.

1 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

2 The purpose of this Act is to establish a commission
3 to study, and report to the Congress recommendations on,
4 how the States might improve and expand their systems
5 for alternative certification of teachers. The Commission
6 is also to make recommendations on the appropriate steps
7 the Federal Government might take in fostering improve-
8 ment and expansion of States' alternative certification
9 programs for teachers.

10 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

11 The Congress finds the following:

12 (1) Interest among the States in providing al-
13 ternate routes for certifying teachers is escalating.

14 (2) In 1998 and 1999 alone, States developed
15 10 new alternate route programs. In the past 2
16 years, 14 States have passed, introduced, or plan to
17 introduce, new legislation to establish alternative
18 programs for the preparation and certification of in-
19 dividuals who have a bachelor's degree and want to
20 become teachers.

21 (3) More than 125,000 individuals have been
22 certified through alternative routes. In 1998 and
23 1999, more than 24,000 teachers were certified
24 through alternative routes in just the 28 States that
25 collected these data.

1 (4) 40 States have some type of alternative to
2 going back to college and majoring in education in
3 order to become a teacher. The States currently re-
4 port 115 such programs.

5 (5) People from all walks of life are stepping
6 forward to meet the projected demand for teachers.
7 Many of these individuals already have at least a
8 bachelor's degree, and for these individuals, the old
9 model of training teachers in undergraduate edu-
10 cation programs is not practical. States are aggres-
11 sively meeting the challenge by creating new training
12 and licensing avenues for people to enter the teach-
13 ing profession.

14 (6) These alternative teacher certification
15 routes provide opportunities for people from various
16 educational backgrounds and walks of life to become
17 teachers. They have opened doors to teaching for
18 persons switching careers, leaving the military, and
19 graduating from liberal arts colleges. They have also
20 provided opportunities for former teachers who want
21 to upgrade their credentials and get back into teach-
22 ing and for people who trained to teach years ago
23 but never did.

24 (7) In 1999, 36 States reported that they had
25 programs targeted specifically to bring into the

1 teaching profession individuals from careers other
 2 than education, the individuals formerly in the mili-
 3 tary, retirees, liberal arts graduates, and others.

4 (8) Compared with recent college graduates who
 5 come into teaching directly from a traditional teach-
 6 er preparation program, those entering teaching
 7 through alternate routes—

8 (A) have degrees with majors in subjects
 9 other than education;

10 (B) are more likely to have work experi-
 11 ence in occupations other than education;

12 (C) tend to be older;

13 (D) are more likely to be people of color;

14 and

15 (E) are more likely to be men.

16 (9) Those entering teaching through alternate
 17 routes are more likely to teach where job demand is
 18 greatest, such as in inner cities and outlying rural
 19 areas, and in high-demand subject areas.

20 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL ADVISORY COM-**
 21 **MISSION ON ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO**
 22 **TEACHER CERTIFICATION.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is established within the ex-
 24 ecutive branch a National Advisory Commission on Alter-
 25 native Routes to Teacher Certification (in this Act re-

ferred to as the “Commission”), comprised of 10 members to be appointed by the Secretary of Education. The membership of the Commission shall be as follows:

(1) 2 members who currently serve as college professors in schools of education.

(2) 2 members who currently serve as State teacher licensure officials.

(3) 2 members who currently serve as classroom teachers.

(4) 2 members who serve as superintendents or comparable local educational agency officials.

(5) 2 members who have special expertise in the alternative certification of teachers, including individuals currently involved in providing alternative routes to teaching and certification.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that the Secretary of Education should draw from a number of important areas of expertise in appointing the Commission, including various experts familiar with the issue of teacher licensure and, in particular, alternative teacher certification.

(c) APPOINTMENTS.—Appointments to the Commission shall be made not later than 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 5. RULES OF THE COMMISSION.**

2 (a) QUORUM.—5 members of the Commission shall
3 constitute a quorum for conducting the business of the
4 Commission.

5 (b) INITIAL MEETING.—If, 60 days after the date of
6 the enactment of this Act, 5 or more members of the Com-
7 mission have been appointed, members who have been ap-
8 pointed may meet and select the Chair (or Co-chairs) who
9 thereafter shall have the authority to begin the operations
10 of the Commission, including the hiring of staff.

11 (c) RULES.—The Commission may adopt such other
12 rules as it considers appropriate.

13 (d) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy in the Commission
14 shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same
15 manner in which the original appointment was made. Any
16 meeting of the Commission or any subcommittee thereof
17 may be held in executive session to the extent that the
18 Chair (Co-Chairs, if elected) or a majority of the members
19 of the Commission or subcommittee determine appro-
20 priate.

21 (e) CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP.—If any indi-
22 vidual is appointed to the Commission by virtue of holding
23 a position described in section 4(a), and ceases to hold
24 such position before the report of the Commission is sub-
25 mitted, such individual may continue as a member of the
26 Commission for not longer than the 30-day period begin-

1 ning on the date that such individual ceases to hold such
2 position.

3 **SEC. 6. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The duties of the Commission
5 shall include the following:

6 (1) To conduct, for a period of not to exceed 18
7 months from the date of its first meeting, the review
8 described in subsection (b).

9 (2) To submit to the Congress a report of the
10 results of such review, including recommendations
11 for revisions to the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
12 cation Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of
13 1965.

14 (b) REVIEW AND ISSUING PROPOSALS.—The Com-
15 mission shall review all existing and proposed programs
16 for alternative teacher certification in the various States
17 and ascertain which programs work best in terms of hiring
18 and retaining highly qualified teachers, including profes-
19 sionals seeking a second career in teaching, and, when ap-
20 plicable, issue proposals and recommendations on the com-
21 ponents of highly effective alternative teacher certification
22 programs and ways for States to develop and implement
23 such programs. The Commission shall also make rec-
24 ommendations concerning the appropriate measures that
25 might be undertaken by the Federal Government to im-

1 prove and expand alternative certification programs in the
2 States, including recommendations for legislative changes
3 to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
4 and the Higher Education Act of 1965.

5 **SEC. 7. POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission or, on the au-
7 thorization of the Commission, any subcommittee or mem-
8 ber thereof, may, for the purpose of carrying out the provi-
9 sions of this Act, hold such hearings and sit and act at
10 such times and places, take such testimony, receive such
11 evidence, and administer such oaths, as the Commission
12 or such designated subcommittee or designated member
13 may deem advisable.

14 (b) CONTRACTING.—The Commission may, to such
15 extent and in such amounts as are provided in appropria-
16 tion Acts, enter into contracts to enable the Commission
17 to discharge its duties under this Act.

18 (c) ASSISTANCE FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES AND OF-
19 FICES.—

20 (1) INFORMATION.—The Commission is author-
21 ized to secure directly from any executive depart-
22 ment, bureau, agency, board, commission, office,
23 independent establishment, or instrumentality of the
24 Government, as well as from any committee or other
25 office of the legislative branch, such information,

1 suggestions, estimates, and statistics as it requires
2 for the purposes of its review and report. Each such
3 department, bureau, agency, board, commission, of-
4 fice, establishment, instrumentality, or committee
5 shall, to the extent not prohibited by law, furnish
6 such information, suggestions, estimates, and statis-
7 tics directly to the Commission, upon request made
8 by the Chair (Co-chairs, if elected).

9 (2) DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.—The Sec-
10 retary of Education is authorized on a nonreimburs-
11 able basis to provide the Commission with adminis-
12 trative services, funds, facilities, staff, and other
13 support services for the performance of the Commis-
14 sion's functions.

15 (3) GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.—
16 The Administrator of General Services shall provide
17 to the Commission on a nonreimbursable basis such
18 administrative support services as the Commission
19 may request.

20 (4) OTHER ASSISTANCE.—In addition to the as-
21 sistance set forth in paragraphs (1) through (3), de-
22 partments and agencies of the United States are au-
23 thorized to provide to the Commission such services,
24 funds, facilities, staff, and other support services as

1 they may deem advisable and as may be authorized
2 by law.

3 (5) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may
4 use the United States mails in the same manner and
5 under the same conditions as departments and agen-
6 cies of the United States.

7 (6) GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use,
8 and dispose of gifts or donations of services or prop-
9 erty in carrying out its duties under this Act.

10 **SEC. 8. STAFF OF THE COMMISSION.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Chair (Co-Chairs, if elected),
12 in accordance with rules agreed upon by the Commission,
13 may appoint and fix the compensation of a staff director
14 and such other personnel as may be necessary to enable
15 the Commission to carry out its functions without regard
16 to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing
17 appointments in the competitive service, and without re-
18 gard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III
19 or chapter 53 of such title relating to classification and
20 General Schedule pay rates, except that no rate of pay
21 fixed under this subsection may exceed the equivalent of
22 that payable to a person occupying a position at level V
23 of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of title 5,
24 United States Code. Any Federal Government employee
25 may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement

1 from the Commission, and such detailee shall retain the
2 rights, status, and privileges of his or her regular employ-
3 ment without interruption.

4 (b) CONSULTANT SERVICES.—The Commission is au-
5 thorized to procure the services of experts and consultants
6 in accordance with section 3109 of title 5, United States
7 Code, but at rates not to exceed the daily rate paid a per-
8 son occupying a position at level IV of the Executive
9 Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States
10 Code.

11 **SEC. 9. COMPENSATION AND TRAVEL EXPENSES.**

12 (a) COMPENSATION.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
14 graph (2), each member of the Commission may be
15 compensated at not to exceed the daily equivalent of
16 the annual rate of basic pay in effect for a position
17 at level IV of the Executive Schedule under section
18 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day
19 during which that member is engaged in the actual
20 performance of the duties of the Commission.

21 (2) EXCEPTION.—Members of the Commission
22 who are officers or employees of the United States
23 or Members of Congress shall receive no additional
24 pay on account of their service on the Commission.

1 (b) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—While away from their
 2 homes or regular places of business in the performance
 3 of services for the Commission, members of the Commis-
 4 sion shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem
 5 in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons em-
 6 ployed intermittently in the Government service are al-
 7 lowed expenses under section 5703(b) of title 5, United
 8 States Code.

9 **SEC. 10. REPORT OF THE COMMISSION; TERMINATION.**

10 (a) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the
 11 date of the first meeting of the Commission, the Commis-
 12 sion shall submit a report to the Committee on Education
 13 and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and
 14 the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pen-
 15 sions of the Senate. The report of the Commission shall
 16 describe the results of its review under section 6(b), shall
 17 make the recommendations for revisions to the Elemen-
 18 tary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the High-
 19 er Education Act of 1965 referred to section 6(a)(2), and
 20 shall such make recommendations to State departments
 21 of education as the Commission considers appropriate.

22 (b) TERMINATION.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission, and all the
 24 authorities of this Act, shall terminate on the date

1 that is 90 days after the date on which the report
2 is required to be submitted under subsection (a).

3 (2) CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES.—The Commis-
4 sion may use the 90-day period referred to in para-
5 graph (1) for the purposes of concluding its activi-
6 ties, including providing testimony to committees of
7 the Congress concerning its report and dissemi-
8 nating such report.

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